The analysis of the subject in the foregoing chapters leads to the conclusion that from the mid-80s to the end of 90s, Russia has taken significant strides towards democracy and institution-building. Institution-building and the development of Russian democracy has been a gradual process of maturation punctuated by dramatic events. Constitution-making and institutional stability have proved to be difficult in all post-communist countries and more so in post-Soviet Russia. In Russia, the predictions that the country would follow the fate of the USSR, have proved to be exaggerated. The adoption of the constitution has been a major step towards development of sound political institutions.

The study begins with situating the subject in its broader historical context. The departure from what has been called command administrative model of politics and society to liberal-democratic market orientated model was not a simple, smooth and unilinear phenomenon. On the contrary, the whole process of transition underwent an extremely difficult, tortuous and at times disastrous process. It has, therefore, been logical to begin the discussion by analysing the major characteristics of political system of the Soviet period. In the first chapter we noted that the Soviet society and the political system was organized and shaped on theoretical foundations of Marxism-Leninism. The fusion of powers in contrast to the principle of separation of powers was considered a cardinal principle of socialist representative system. This organizational principle led to a far-reaching absorption of legislative and judicial functions by the executive. Organs of the political system, vertically as well as horizontally were
interlocked and interdependent where the ultimate power remained in the hands of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Such a system, however, led to a tendency on the part of the party organizations and officials to usurp the functions of state institutions, thereby causing stagnation in the system. As the state organs such as Supreme Soviet, the Presidium, the judiciary etc. continued to function under the encompassing wings of the CPSU, which had developed vested interests, led to institutional stagnation. This forced the reform-minded Communist Party General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev to undertake a multi pronged reform strategy.

The seedbed of post-Soviet constitutional and institutional development of Russia was laid during 1985-91 when Mikhail Gorbachev was appointed General Secretary of the Communist Party in March 1985. With his appointment of General Secretary, he brought a rhetoric and new vocabulary to Soviet politics. In speeches both within the Soviet Union and abroad he echoed an extremely coherent set of themes such as limited government, separation of powers, rule of law etc. under the umbrella of Perestroika. This acceleration of reform became explicit at the Nineteenth Party Conference of the Communist Party in June 1988, when he called for the creation of a new legislative body, the Congress of People's Deputies as well as a variety of other institutional changes. This led to a dramatic overhaul of the existing practices. This change reflected in a set of reforms that led to a complete erosion of the power of the Communist Party and it struck at the very heart of the communist party as the vanguard of the
proletariat. The consequences of these reforms on institutional change has been dealt thoroughly in the first section of chapter two.

As it usually happens in the transitional process, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, early years of Russia's renewal proved extraordinarily disturbing marked by escalating conflict between President Yeltsin and the Congress of People's Deputies over the basic principles of the constitution inherited from the Soviet era. When Yeltsin introduced the economic reform programme in 1991, a direct collision between the executive and the legislative branch appeared unavoidable. 'And with the constitution no longer showing the lines of power', there appeared to be no end to the 'war of laws'. When the struggle between two major institutions of the nascent political system appeared to be irreconcilable, the President made a momentous decision to throw the principles of democratic negotiations and accommodation and use force to settle the question. In the process, the parliament was compelled to abdicate thereby providing the President an opportunity to begin the process of imposing a constitution on the nation that was the handiwork of his team. The presidential draft contained all the provisions favouring strongest presidency in Russia ever known to the people. Our second chapter entitled: 'Constitution of 1993: A Brief Outline of the Emerging Institutions', is a prelude to the other four chapters. This chapter gives a brief outline of the emerging institutions.

At the close of 1999, nearly six years after the emergence of Russia as an independent state, it remains in the midst of profound transformation. Predictions, even though made with much care, have become difficult
because of the fluid conditions of Russia. Yet, notwithstanding the difficulty and limitations on Russia's future course, the positive accomplishments of recent years, particularly in consolidation of a strong state and institution building are undeniable. Five years into Russia's constitutional revolution, its trajectory remains positive with sound political institutions, though fledgling and nascent. Russia is thus moving towards normalization of political order as democratic processes are becoming habitual.

Thus at the time when Yeltsin created a strong presidential institution, many thought this would lead to another form of autocratic rule in Russia. However, Yeltsin's insistence on a strong presidency did help Russia to stabilize for the time being. His departure from the political scene and the conception of that office by Vladimir Putin has reinvigorated this institution with newer responsibilities and challenges. Our discussion in the third chapter reveals that this new leader of Russia, like his predecessor, inherits the socio-economic legacies of a transitional state. Out of the many challenges, one of the major challenges for Putin continues to be the cooperation with the parliamentary branch.

As far as institution of parliament is concerned, Yelstin's constitution created a relatively weaker parliament where legislative initiative rests with both the President as well as Parliament. In chapter four, which deals with the institution of parliament, we discussed the peculiar circumstances under which Russian Parliament emerged as a weak representative organ as compared to the institution of President. Our
discussion also shows some of the procedural and structural problems of the new parliamentary institution which need urgent attention if parliamentary performance is to improve. However, the political balance in the country is stabilising as far as this representative institution is concerned. A rough balance between pro and anti-reform forces has thus emerged among the elites at the national, regional and local levels. In the 1993, 1995 and 1999 Duma elections, the balance of pro, anti-reform forces remained steady giving some hope that an ideal atmosphere for development of more effective policies is fast emerging in post-Soviet Russia. The study also suggests that the emergence of a large cohesive party system, coalition building which is still lacking in Russia, if encouraged, would help reach out consensus on major policy issues.

Our discussion on legal institutions in chapter five revealed that during the communist period, law remained only on paper as power remained in the hands of the Communist Party. However, some attempts at reforming law started as early as 1989-90. These reforms were corroborated further by the adoption of 1993 constitution and strengthening of the legal institutions. The constitution clearly delineated the respective powers and functions of the various branches of government, thereby leading to lessening of conflict and war of laws. There are also some positive developments that can contribute to the long-term future of judicial reform in Russia. These included the 1996 Law on Court System, the dramatic expansion of legal education, the creation of Judges' own organisations such as All Russian and Regional Congresses of Judges, the
Council of Judges and Regional Councils of Judges, the Conferences and Assembly of Judges. These are important steps in Russia's quest for a sound legal order. Constitutional Court in Russia also played an important role in raising the legal consciousness of the people. A detailed analysis of the constitutional court has also been included in this chapter.

Centre-periphery relations continues to remain a difficult problem of state building in post-Soviet Russia and this is the focus of our concluding chapter i.e. chapter six on federal institutions and centre-periphery relations. During 1991-93, accompanying the executive-legislative conflict in Moscow, there was a deepening struggle between the federal centre and the local officials and institutions in the provinces. A chain reaction began as one after another of Russia's ethnic republics declared 'sovereignty', a process that met with growing dissatisfaction from the centre. Tuva, Sakha-Yakutia and Chechno-Ingushetia passed laws asserting that their constitution legally superseded the provisions of the Federal Treaty signed in March 1992 and also tried to 'extort' greater financial benefits from the central government. Lacking a clear vision of a federal structure, the Yeltsin team chose the worst possible strategy for dealing with the challenge from the provinces; individual agreements and bilateral treaties promising financial advantages to some and temporary compromise to others. Federal-Republic and Federal-Regional relations were thereby transformed into a process of endless haggling. This not only weakened the embryonic structure of new Russian State, but also led to growing tension between the centre and the regions. The evolving relationship between
Russian national and regional political relations is essential to viable constitutionalism. In this regard, Yeltsin constitution will have to be supplemented with the development of a structured and patterned behaviour on the part of both national and regional units accommodating it with input from diverse elites, thereby leading to a greater chance of fostering democratic constitutional order.

To conclude, how deeply has democracy taken hold in Russia and how firm are its institutional moorings is yet a premature question. However, the study makes it clear that adoption of a constitution is the core constructive act of state and institution building. With the adoption of constitution in 1993, Russian statehood has now achieved a stable judicial form and the new political order has achieved a degree of political stabilisation. However, as Sejnis noted 'it is of course not enough to adopt a constitution'. There remains the question, however, of the degree to which social attitudes and behaviours influence the evolution of political institutions. The new constitution was considered by many as a transitional document which was unlikely to survive Yeltsin. Many also argued that it was only a temporary document and could not serve the country in the long run. In practice, however, rather than being yet another temporary document the new constitution promises to provide the basis for a period of relative political stability and democratic consolidation in Russia.

In post-Soviet Russia, the fundamentals of statehood are still in the process of evolution after nearly ten years of Russia's emergence as an independent state. Russia still lacks a consensus on the concept of
statehood. President Yeltsin was not in a commanding position to articulate basic philosophies of statehood. The present President is in a better position and therefore he is attempting to articulate the philosophy of state with emphasis on concepts such as law-governed state, rights, freedom etc. He takes a pragmatic view of Russia's situation and emphasises on a strong state -strong society concept where the existing constitution would be the framework for the effective exercise of state power. He is trying to enact a unified, centralised state where every political institution will have its intended role. In Russia's tradition, the state's structure and institutions have always played an extremely important role. A strong state is not an anomaly and not something to fight but rather is the source and guarantor of order, the initiator and moving force of any changes. Whether the President's actions will help Russia ushering in a stable state with stable institutions remains an open question. But he has set forth a new and far more promising conceptual model of the 'strong state' for future Russia where institutions will have an important role to play.